JANUARY 31ST

Movie-Land

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Nº
VOL

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Mon., Jan. 31.—Sessue Hayakawa in "The Beggar Prince"; also Bryant Washburn in "Mrs. Temple's Telegram."

Thurs., Feb. 3.—Taylor Holmes in "Nothing But the Truth."

MAJESTIC CINEMA SUPREME, CLAPHAM.

Jan. 31.—Chrissie White in "Alwin." Madge Stuart in "An Amateur Gentleman."

Feb. 3.—Taylor Holmes in "Nothing But the Truth." Malvina Longfellow in Rita's novel, "Calvary."

THE PAVILION, LAVENDER HILL, CLAPHAM JUNCTION, S.W.

Jan. 31.—Earle Williams in "When a Man Loves"; Kathryn Adams in "A Little Brother of the Rich."

Feb. 3.—Sessue Hayakawa in "The Beggar Prince." The opening episode of "The Son of Tarzan."

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Movie Land

THE BRITISH CINEMA WEEKLY DE LUXE.

Editor: MRS. HELEN SEVREZ.
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The Editor will be pleased to consider MSS., 1,000—1,500 words in length, on film, theatrical and dancing topics. MSS. must be exclusive and original, preferably accompanied by photographs, and stamped and addressed envelope for return in case of unsuitability. While the Editor will make every effort to ensure the safe return of rejected MSS., no responsibility will be accepted for their loss.

SHOULD THE CONTINUOUS PERFORMANCE GO?

WHAT DO PICTURE-GOERS THINK?

The vogue of the continuous performance has become so general that a suggestion to follow in the wake of the theatre, and to plan set "shows" for a given period, seems like trying to roll a stone uphill so far as the majority of film exhibitors are concerned. They, so far as one can discover, are the primary obstacle in the way. Many film producers would, I fancy, heartily welcome an innovation which would ensure longer life for their really big productions, and, incidentally, enable them to do better work for the simple reason that they could give more time to fewer films.

* * *

Since the inception of the continuous performance plan, movie-land audiences have increased apace. They have increased in quality as well as quantity. But the exhibitor will not listen to this plea. Busy men and women, he says, find it convenient to turn into a movie-palace for an hour or so to snatch a brief respite from the daily grind. They would probably find their way thither far less frequently if the "show" were at stated times. The advantage of the continuous performance, so far as this public is concerned, is that it fits in with any time scheme, and is a boon to those whose leisure is scarce and uncertain.

* * *

On the other hand, when I discussed the matter with one of our foremost producers, I found he was emphatic in his conviction that the growth of a really high standard of film-play was handicapped by this fashion of the continuous performance. The reason for this is obvious. It is not easy to perceive the trend of a closely-constructed play half-way through its performance. The tendency of the continuous performance, therefore, is to encourage the more superficial type of play, loosely constructed, and with incidents that rely for their effect more upon an instantaneous and violent appeal to the emotions than upon any constructive merit in the play.

* * *

In view of the increasing demand for the better type of picture-play, would it be wiser to fall back on the "stated times" programme? Would the effect of the change be definitely unfavourable to picture-house proprietors? Which plan would the public prefer if the vote were put to them?

* * *

It would be interesting to learn what the public, the producers and picture-house proprietors have to say in the matter.

HILDA BAYLEY

As "Simonetta" in "Carnival."

DOMESTIC HISTORY ON THE FILMS.

By D. Leigh-Bennett.

(EDITOR'S NOTE.—This article contains inspiration for the biggest producer in this country. Who is he? This is his chance!)

WILL someone please film a domestic history for the schools? There is, perhaps, no educational film so badly needed as this, or any subject more worthy of a writer and producer with genius.

But note I say domestic history—not political. For how can children ever be made to realise the importance of dynasties, the significance of revolutionary uprisings, the fanatical anxieties of reformers, or the odd jealousies that occasion wars? Before they learn of all this for the pleasure of examiners they ought surely to have a vivid picture of home life and conditions in the different ages; because home life, after all, is the only phase of life they have experienced, and, therefore, can appreciate.

* * *

If someone filmed the story of a family who were re-incarnated in every period from Druidical times in Early Britain to the present day, we should have a movie that was enchantingly informative, and the child-mind would get that sense of perspective which is the necessary foundation for historical facts. For the story of the British home shows the evolution of personal safety, privacy, order, hygiene, and comfort. And if civilisation may be defined as the gradual inculcation of mental tolerance and physical cleanliness, then here is the best example of how these virtues have been brought about.

Until this scenario of family life down the ages is filmed, you may talk to children of the Tudor period, but these words will convey nothing to their minds. They may suddenly think of Elizabeth's ruff or Henry VIII.'s inconstancy, because they have probably seen pictures of the famous ruff, and they found the idea of five wives so comical and naughty that they have never forgotten it. They have nothing, however, but these imaginative, unrelated facts to fasten on. They have no sharp impression of Tudor days because they have no mental picture of Tudor homes, clothes and manners, furniture, and mode of life. Give them that first, then talk to them of the Reformation and how it affected these Merrie Englanders, and this association of ideas will help them to memorise the harder part of it.

* * *

My typical British family (with servants, animals, household equipments all complete) would, of course, become involved in some important national crisis in every incarnation. And, for this reason, each period might need a film to itself. Thus there would be a series of plots as there would have to be a series of elaborate settings. But The Family—each member of it strongly characterised—would be seen gradually losing their brutishness, gradually surrounding themselves with amenities, constantly reaching out to new ideas and becoming possessed by new anxieties and mannerisms.

It would be enormous fun to do, and the producer would need the expert advice of historians, architects and archæologists. And it would be enormously funny as well as instructive to watch; remembering, for instance, how the dazzling Beau of the 18th century had walked and thought and acted when he was a pious Roundhead, or a turbulent Early Briton, or a learned mediæval monk.

In characterising The Family mother must be eternally concerned with domesticity—so showing the different modes and manners of the different homes. Father's part must indicate the economic side of life—showing how this was influenced by the hardy individualism of Saxon times, the semi-communism of the feudal system, the guild system of Tudor days, and the factory system of the 19th century. One son might be a boy of action and a rebel, the other a more studious, sensitive type. One daughter might be a beautiful, flirtatious, vital creature, the other practical and conservative. So the swing of the pendulum, the pull of ideas, and what we call "the march of progress" could be indicated.

* * *

Then all the settings from late Tudor times onward might be original. At any rate, this should be the aim. And all the dresses and household goods should be, as far as possible, genuine relics rather than stage properties. For in this sort of educational film one can indulge in the most meticulous realism. It all adds to the excitement and intention. Antiquarians and collectors like the late Sir Guy Laking would be invaluable as advisory patrons in such first-class work.

I can think of nothing finer as a commercial proposition than such a film as this. The market for it is obviously imperial, and even international, in extent. The British public, anyway, would clamour to see anything so authentic and yet entertaining; and, surely, when history can be taught in this manner the small portable projector Miss Lewis wrote about will appear in every school.

* * *

But perhaps the most persuasive reason for tackling such a subject lies in its exclusively cinematographic character. The cinema alone can deal effectively with such a splendid canvas. No other medium can give that sense of continuity, that concourse of characters, that mass of faithful detail, or the panoramic quality peculiar to history. Here the subject and the method of expression seem to be made for one another. There is no possible challenge or comparison. In these educational scenarios the cinema will have supremacy over spoken drama, written drama, books, lecturers, and historians. Nothing can rival it as an agent for making the past come to life again.

Producers go on turning out stale farce and tragedy while the immortal deeds and genial domestic struggles of an imperial race remain unfilmed.

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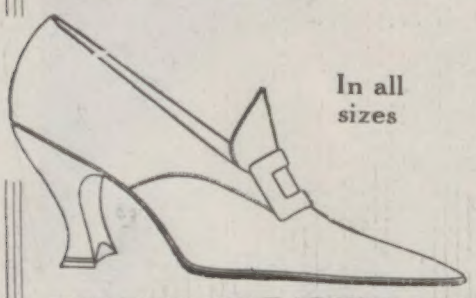

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A gentleman from Dartford, Kent, writing for a copy of "The Matrimonial Circle" on the 19th July says:—"I was delighted when I saw your advertisement in 'The Dartford Chronicle'; I consider 'The Matrimonial Circle' is just the very thing needed in these times, and I see how directly appropriate it is to the present, now the strain of the past conflict is over." While "The Cornish and Devon Post" recently, quite unsolicited, said "THE MATRIMONIAL CIRCLE," which is conducted on strictly business lines, contains a large number of advertisements from both ladies and gentlemen who desire to enter the matrimonial state. The editor announces that the utmost care is taken to ensure that every advertisement appearing therein is genuine. No effort is spared to prove the authenticity of each, and should the slightest possible doubt exist, the communication on which that doubt rests is forthwith returned to the sender with a peremptory demand for a full explanation. The publication will be *sent post free in sealed envelope on receipt of 6d. P.O. or Stamps.* Address—

The Editor,
18, Hogarth Road, Earl's Court.

WILLIAM FOX

President of Fox Film Corporation.

MASTERS OF MOVIES: WILLIAM FOX.

THERE are few people who are not familiar with the name of William Fox, not only in this country, but the world over; and all who are movie-goers know both his name and his films. William Fox is the most influential and most powerful individual distributor of motion pictures in the world. It is estimated that over 1,500,000,000 people witness Fox productions in a year. Of these over seven millions see them in William Fox theatres, for apart from his manufacturing and distributing interest in the film business, the name of Fox shines over a huge chain of theatres in the United States.

* * *

When it is realised that not very many years ago William Fox was working as a tailor's assistant in the slum quarters of New York, one can scarcely believe that one man could have achieved so much. Combined with his wonderful energy and never-flagging enthusiasm is a sympathy for those whose pay envelope is not a bulky one, and herein lies the key to his success. Coming from a poor district, and working amongst those who toil in factories and mills, William Fox realised how much a few hours' relaxation at low cost meant to millions of workers.

He saved enough money to buy an "amusement arcade" in one of the lowest quarters of New York. Out of that penny arcade (which at first proved a failure) has grown the biggest motion picture business the world has ever known.

* * *

Always, however, it was his co-workers of his early struggling days whom William Fox had in mind when success gradually rewarded his efforts.

To-day this giant of the film business might sit back and take things easily. But every day finds him at his office, supervising sales, instructing his branch managers at home and overseas, interviewing "small fry," and attending to the hundred and one little details which are the outcome of success. Despite his keen business brain, his wonderful activity and his unflagging interest in things financial, William Fox is a dreamer. When scenario writers outline their plots to him he will be carried away to an Elysian field where his mind rambles amongst visions of film characters that will be.

* * *

Asked if he considered the motion picture had reached its limit, William Fox said that in his opinion it had no limitations, and he thought it quite possible that in the motion picture the world has been given the secret key to the fourth dimension.

William Fox is one of the many exhibitors who consider that the opening of the cinema houses on Sunday would prove of benefit to the community. He sees no reason why they should not be open on Sunday.

"The motion picture," he maintains, "is an established institution, and an intellectual and absorbing factor to which Presidents, Kings and Princes give willing testimony. It cannot be hampered in its legitimate expression any more than the free Press of the country. The usual programme of a picture house is composed of dramatic stories, comedies, travel pictures and cartoons. It is a sort of magazine—or, perhaps, to be more to the point, a Sunday newspaper. No one has yet suggested the suppression of the latter. But if a certain section of the contents of the average Sunday newspaper were visualised on the screen the law might prohibit a Sunday performance!

* * *

"Let me cite an example of the recognised value of the screen by the ablest minds in America. From mere individual activities, inspired by men and women who saw certain flagrant evils in American penal methods, the idea of prison reform has grown to a foremost national issue, so that a great party has incorporated it in its declaration of principles. The spirit of it will be reflected from the screen to millions of thinking Americans. It is not a 'plank' of any particular party platform. Such national interests are the concern of the nation, of every thinking man and woman. The human side of potential prison reform gives it an intensely intimate appeal, and every man and woman will consider it as his or her especial business to see that there is prison reform. Such reforms have to do with the 'making over' of defective human material that is a burden and a menace to society, and its conversion to decent citizenship.

"The motion picture has become an intimate, permanent feature of our national life, and the men who have invested millions in it, and who are wide awake to its stupendous possibilities, are working ever towards betterment, in the largest possible sense. To identify the film more and more closely with the habits and thoughts of the people, to make it the outstanding medium of national expression—this is the aim of those of us who rejoice in a free Press and who are working patiently, hopefully, and sincerely for a free film."

FROM THE EXHIBITOR'S POINT OF VIEW.

(Mr. Hubert W. Harwood, the manager of The King's Picture Playhouse, Chelsea, one of the most enterprising exhibitors near London, talks about films from his own point of view.)

THERE is a great deal more in the art of capturing and keeping regular patronage than the mere erection of a picture house and the hiring of so many thousand feet of film. The public has passed the stage when all it wanted was " a three hours' show " and did not much mind what the films were like or how they were presented. There is a general demand now for value for money in entertainments as in everything else, and the picture-going public will not patronise the house where films are ill-chosen and inartistically projected.

Mr. Harwood is an exhibitor with ideas, and with ideas that evidently suit the widely differing Chelsea residents who make up his regular audiences. At any rate his house organ, an entertaining little weekly paper dealing with the films of the week, has a net circulation of close on two thousand, which seldom varies more than twenty or so copies a week. The weekly competition for screen " howlers " is a great success, and hardly a film is shown but is discovered to have some glaring indiscretion of the producer in it.

" This little competition," said Mr. Harwood, " keeps the public alive and forces them to follow the films closely."

" There certainly is an art in choosing films. You have not only to decide at the trade show if you like the film yourself but if your particular public will like it too. After all, the producer never really knows what the public does like, as he is never in touch with it. It is only through the exhibitor that he can feel how his films are going. If your films are chosen properly you can keep two thousand people absolutely silent right through the programme. Of course, you sometimes make mistakes. I have occasionally booked a film that I did not very much care for myself and it has gone with a bang when I showed it. Travellers come to me and say, ' This is a film which will fill any theatre, but, of course, it doesn't matter what you put on at The King's. The place is always full.' I point out that they are wrong. It is only by putting on just the films that my people want that I can please my patrons and make them regular comers. Then, again, you occasionally go to a trade show and before you have seen more than a few feet you can say ' That's mine.' It has something about it which strikes you at once as being fresh. Others you see right through and think ' Well, I don't know, I don't think much of it. Perhaps I'll leave it alone,' and then when you think it over you realise there is more to it than struck you at first, and you book it after all. Very often these second-thought choices are big successes."

I asked if he found that there was any general demand for British productions.

" There certainly is, and it has grown just lately very much. People often come to me and ask why I don't put on more British subjects. At present I do not think it is possible to fill your programme with British films, but they are improving so rapidly that we get more and more good ones. If the exhibitor is careful and only books the really good ones, there is no doubt that the public will go on asking for British films. It would ruin the British industry, however, if he put on anything and everything just because it was British, because there is some very bad British stuff just as there is very bad American."

The actual choosing of the films, however, is only one of the problems of the exhibitor, and Mr. Harwood declares that quite as important as care in choice is the proper balancing of the programme.

" We try to send away our people with a pleasant feeling in their mouths as it were, and we have to remember that we have got to please both the people in the fifteen shilling box and those in the ninepenny seats. The programme must be so arranged that each gets what he wants without boring the other."

" Music, too, is enormously important. My musical director, Mr. A. Davison, often spends days fitting the right music to a film, as if it is not right the whole effect can be ruined. We have a library of over fifty thousand pieces for him to choose from. Mr. Davison sat through the whole of 'Earthbound' twice before he attempted to fit it, and the work of fitting took him three days. So you can see how much importance we attach to the music."

Mr. Harwood, however, is emphatic that the successful running of any picture theatre cannot depend on one man. He is full of enthusiasm for the assistance which he receives from his entire staff, all of whom work into the general scheme. Ventilation, civility, cleanliness are all things that count with the picture-going public and, perhaps unconsciously, enhance the effect of artistic projection. Mr. Harwood added that he was a great believer in publicity, and that he has found that some of the renters are more helpful than others in

supplying the material for which exhibitors may ask.

"I am certain that an artistic poster is a tremendous asset," he went on, "but it must be striking and simple. People have no time nowadays to stop in the road to read longwinded stories. The poster must be something that will catch the attention, and have only enough lettering on it to be immediately readable. People often have no time even to walk, and you want to catch their interest as they pass on the tops of omnibuses. I certainly believe in the big poster, and always take one if it is offered. I argue that if it is worth the renter's or producer's while to produce a big poster, it will be worth my while to have it on my walls."

Mr. Harwood hastened to add that he did not for a moment claim that his methods were the best, or that his theatre was run on perfect lines. "We can always learn something," he said, "but I am a film enthusiast and am able to feel that if I do manage to do anything a little bit better, my public will appreciate it."

As a very small indication of Mr. Harwood's thoroughness, it is diverting to learn that occasionally the spent omnibus tickets dropped in the theatre are examined to discover from which parts of London the audience is being drawn. He then knows where his patrons come from and where advertising will be most likely to show results.

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SCENARIOS IN BRIEF.

This Week's Pictures.

The principal films scheduled for " release " during the next week or ten day days include :—

IF I WERE KING.....*Fox*
ONLY A MILL GIRL.....*Ideal*
THE PURSUIT OF PAMELA.....*Jury*
HUMAN DESIRE.....*Jury*
ANYBODY'S WIDOW.....*Gaumont*
THE FALSE ROAD.....*Famous-Lasky*
THE HUSBAND HUNTER.....*Granger*
THE LURE OF CROONING WATER...*Stoll*
THE MERRY MADCAP.....*Anchor*
NOTHING BUT NERVE.....*Butcher*
NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH.....*F.B.O.*
THE RIGHT TO LIE.....*Pathé*
THE STREET OF SEVEN STARS.....*Regent*
TRENT'S LAST CASE.....*Walturdaw*

* * *

The outstanding feature in the current releases is the William Fox production of " If I Were King," a picture version of the well-known novel by Justin Huntly McCarthy, and " starring " William Farnum. It is not often that an author has a good word to say for the screen versions of his works, but Justin McCarthy is the exception. He says : " The tale has been re-told vividly and brilliantly in the terms of the new art. The characterisation is excellent, the setting remarkable for its beauty, and the handling of the great crowds towards the close a marvel of effect. But the triumph of the film was William Farnum's interpretation of the part of Francois Villon. Humour, poetry, rascality, gallantry, valour, passion, tragedy, played in their turn upon William Farnum's face, so eloquent in its wordless action that I could almost believe I was hearing William Farnum's voice."

* * *

For those who have not read the novel or seen the stage play it may be briefly stated that the scenes are laid in the days of the 15th century when Louis XI. was King of France, and the story centres around one " Villon," a vagabond thief, yet a dreamer and poet. He abides in the lowest quarter of Paris, and is chief of a band of rogues known as the " Cockle Shells." Between the hours when he is not indulging in some roguery, he wiles away many an hour, sometimes softening the coarsened hearts of his followers with his wonderful verses, at other times quickening their pulses with his stirring poem " If I Were King."

MATHESON LANG
As Silvio Steno in " Carnival."

* * *

Months of research work and labour were devoted to the preparation of this production before a single scene was " shot," in order that no point of detail as to the dress and customs in creating the correct atmosphere of the period should mar a single scene. Hundreds of supers were employed for the big spectacular scene, and thousands of pounds were spent upon the special settings, particularly the King's palace, which was erected for the occasion.

* * *

Anita Stewart is the star in " Human Desire," which is described as " a drama of mother love." The story concerns a convent girl who runs away and goes to America because of her love of children. While there she is protected by an artist who gets

her to pose for him as the Madonna. His wife, from whom he is separated, returns and accuses the girl of living with him, and turns her out. She wanders homeless till a surprise turn of fate brings about an unexpected *denouement*. Anita Stewart, as the young Italian woman, has a part which by her able portrayal will enlist all sympathies, and the whole picture is beautifully produced and photographed.

* * *

"The Lure of Crooning Water," in which that much-paragraphed and photographed couple, Ivy Duke and Guy Newall, play the leading roles, is a simple domestic drama, effectively told and beautifully photographed. It is of particular interest as an example of an all-British film.

* * *

"Only a Mill Girl" is adapted from the mill drama by Sheila Walsh, for which it is claimed that it has been played to "over 10,000,000 people." It has been produced by Lewis Willoughby and "features" Harry Foxwell in his original part in the stage play. The story is old-fashioned melodrama with plenty of action and up-to-date sensations, including an aëroplane chase. It is the old story of master and employee who love the same girl, and the wiles of an unscrupulous woman who loves the employee.

* * *

"Nothing But the Truth" is a screen version of the farce of the same name which had a lengthy run on the stage in London. As the man who took on a bet that he could not tell the truth for a week, Taylor Holmes provides some really cheery humour.

ANITA STEWART in "Human Desire."

WILLIAM FARNUM
As Francois Villon in "If I Were King."

"The Pursuit of Pamela" is another screen adaptation of a popular stage success, with Edna Flugrath as the heroine. The story tells of a girl who married an old man she had never met in order to get freedom, while he married her for her money. She subsequently runs away and meets a man she loves, who is too honourable to take advantage of her. However, he falls ill and she goes to nurse him. Having saved him, she returns to find that her husband has been killed by the same plague.

* * *

Although "Carnival" is not, strictly speaking, a film of the week, I should like to mention it briefly now, because it marks the inauguration of the Alliance Film Company of an attempt to break down the "block booking" system which prevents the public from seeing the majority of pictures until six months or a year after they have been produced. "Carnival," with Matheson Lang in the leading role, will be seen at a "Trade Show" by the leading film exhibitors and the press on 8th February, and it will be "released" to the public on March 24th. It is a very fine production, of which more anon, when the Trade Show is over.

MISS DOROTHY MINTO

MISS DOROTHY MINTO.

(Miss Minto's many admirers, and she has added considerably to their number and to an already assured stage reputation by her share in the success of The Grand Guignol season, will offer her their sympathy on learning that, temporarily at any rate, she has had to give up one of her more strenuous parts on the advice of her doctor.)

THERE are many people who, in even most strenuous health, look out upon life with a jaundiced eye. They see no joy in the mere fact of existence. They can find no humour in the small incidents of life. Even greater is the number of people who shrivel up under adversity and wilt at the first signs of ill-health. To such people a cold in the head is a tragedy. They are people to be mourned with, as few of us feel our wittiest or brightest when actually in physical pain. Miss Dorothy Minto possesses the amazingly rare capacity to laugh at illness, and when I condoled with her on hearing that her doctor had warned her that she was likely to be seriously ill unless she took things easily, I discovered that her sense of humour is a thing without a flaw.

Though threatened with a nursing home and enforced inaction, she can see it as a joke, and can laugh with unassumed amusement at herself. "Picture me," she said, "lying on a sofa all day with a cup of tea. It's not like me, is it?" and anyone who has seen Miss Minto making a cyclonic entry on to the stage and holding an entire audience with that vivacious personality of hers will agree that it is not.

Films, unfortunately, are partly to blame for this threatened breakdown, and she suggests that experience is proving that it is not feasible for an actress working as she is doing in the theatre with constant rehearsals for new plays to work in the studio as well.

* * *

While appearing at the Little Theatre in the "Grand Guignol," she played a part in "The Game of Life," which, by the way, she believes will be a great success, and often was kept hard at work from eight-thirty in the morning until she had to go to the theatre in the evening.

"I love film work," she said, "and should like to do a great deal more than I have done, but to work all day in the studio and then come on to the theatre is a big strain. Actually on the day we opened at the Little, although I hadn't been able to sleep much the night before, I was working on a film from eleven in the morning until so late in the afternoon that I only got back to the theatre in time to get on to the stage without any dinner." Even this mournful memory that would move many a strong man to anger or a weaker one to tears, only draws from Miss Minto a smile at herself. Her stage comedy is not merely technique. It is an expression of an irrepressible sense of the endlessly ridiculous.

She does claim, however, that humour is the hardest thing to assume for the film. The actor is often called upon to go many hours without food or only refreshed with a small sandwich, and to be funny to order in those circumstances is none too easy.

"On the stage you make your point and get your laugh, and the laughter of the audience carries you along. When you are hungry it's almost natural to appear angry or sad. And the camera is not exactly an encouraging factor. You must *feel* your part to play it properly."

* * *

I asked Miss Minto what would be her ideal screen play, and she voted whole-heartedly for the short comedy. "Something in about three reels. Not farce, but an incident that gradually develops, like the growing up of a child. I can't explain exactly what I mean, but——" She grasped her ankle with one hand, wrinkled her brow in perplexity, and hoped that I understood. I murmured an affirmative, and suggested the Schnitzler "Anatol Play Cycle," in one of which, I think it was called "Episode," Miss Minto played, to the infinite delight of highly sophisticated playgoers, under Mr. Granville Barker's management.

She agreed at once that they should make great film comedies and that she would like the opportunity of playing her own part of Bibi—I fancy the lady's full name was Bianca—for the film.

"It was only a small part," she explained, "but it had possibilities. I played it here at The Little, you know, during the Granville Barker repertory season, the finest experience that anyone could have. Oh, yes. I certainly believe that repertory is the best training—within limits. You know, you can do too much of it, and it's so awfully easy to get the 'touring look,' unless one's very careful. At the same time I am sure everyone should go on tour and play all kinds of parts if they are going to make good."

Miss Dorothy Minto—continued.

Miss Minto is one of that select number of successful actresses who were fortunate enough to go on tour with the Benson repertory.

" I should like to see," she went on, " a whole lot more of the ' Limehouse Nights ' stories filmed, and if I could I should love to play in one myself, but, of course," she added generously, " I don't think anyone could have played Lilian Gish's part in ' Broken Blossoms ' better than she did. It was a wonderful performance. Don't you think ' Twinkletoes ' would film well? "

I was there to hear what Miss Minto thought about things, not to air my own views, and I murmured something non-committal.

" You know," she went on, " I always think that one of the great faults of British films is that so many people don't take the work seriously. In the theatre you have got to be serious—yes, even in comedy work—but such a lot of people look on film work as a joke. I go out and meet a lot of people, and I am always hearing them talk as though to ' do a day's film work ' was a kind of jest. Many of them don't do it as a living but as a new sort of recreation."

Miss Minto quoted, as an instance of this, a memorable occasion when she arrived at her dressing room at the studio to find it already more than well-filled with a number of these amusement-seeking ladies fresh from their own cars. She was greeted with effusion.

"Oh ! Miss Minto," one of them gushed. " Such fun. We have just been making up, and have used your grease-paint." Miss Minto waved an expressive hand as though comment was beyond her, as I gathered it had been on the actual occasion. She had left them to it, " until they had quite finished with my room."

There are occasions, though rare and almost epoch making, when even Miss Minto's sense of humour feels the strain.

GEORGE WOODHAM-SMITH.

Neither Here Nor There.

A writer in the " Evening News " complains that in a forthcoming film the producer sends a Londoner down to Cornwall dressed in silk hat and morning coat to inspect a tin mine. He should not overlook the fact, however, that artistes' wardrobes are expensive things nowadays, and perhaps the fellow couldn't afford evening clothes.

* * *

A new film shows a car containing a young woman fall into the sea, and ten minutes afterwards the hero rescues her. Of course, the excitement simply made her hold her breath.

As an ear-witness of a torrid dispute between two carpenters in a certain studio, we can only re-affirm our belief in the dictum that the labourer is worthy of his ire.

* * *

An American actress states that she has " the biggest eyes on the screen." We shall soon be hearing that Mr. So-and-So, the producer, has the longest and most pointed ears.

* * *

A German, one J. Engl, has filed twenty applications at the Patents Office in respect of kinematograph devices. His confidence is no doubt due to the fact that, judged by his name, he is half English.

* * *

We hear that a process has been invented in America for " causing oysters to produce pearls." Trade Unionists are naturally anxious to secure the membership of the oysters, and to ensure that when the latter get up from their beds they will only have to face an eight hour day. We trust it will never be said of the oysters that they cast their pearls before the inventors.

* * *

The candour of the Underground Railway authorities, as evinced in their posters showing an analysis of expenditure, is further emphasised by a list of " Stations going West."

* * *

" If time is money, I must have a good bit in hand," soliloquised the old lag as he left " the house " after twenty years' faithful service.

* * *

With gas at 5s. 4d. a thousand, Members of Parliament will simply *have* to be economical.

* * *

If, as Dr. Thompson (of Pittsburgh, Pa.) states, "the shorter the dress of the female and the lower the neck of her bodice, the greater her moral influence," surely there must be a limit to morality.

* * *

Fired at by a fellow-countryman in a Finsbury street, an Italian escaped by hurling himself through a hairdresser's window. He evidently knew it was going to be a close shave.

* * *

It is stated that the safest seat in an omnibus is immediately behind the driver, and we hear from a very unreliable source that drivers have ear-marked that particular seat for wealthy clients. This, no doubt, explains the politeness of a certain driver, who, on taking his seat, raised his hat and requested the passengers to " Please excuse my back."

EDWARD EVE.

SESSUE HAYAKAWA

Who, in the opinion of some of the critics, is the finest male film actor in the world. Destined for the "silent Navy," he preferred the silent stage.

DRESS FOR THE FILM: WIT & DIGNITY IN COSTUME.

An interview with Mrs. Gladys Jackson, who is at present designing original costumes for the Alliance Film Corporation.

MRS. GLADYS JACKSON maintains that the possibilities of dress as a means of expressing character, disposition, the finer differences of class, and general mental atmosphere have up to the present been very indifferently appreciated. In ordinary life and on the legitimate stage the voice and the manner of speaking give such clear indication of the individual's personal tastes. The sub-title, with its essential condensation, cannot take the place of the spoken word in this respect. It is here that clothes must play such a very much more important part than on the stage, where the voice of the actor or actress conveys individuality and costume is mainly used to obtain mass effects.

I found Mrs. Jackson in her very charming Chelsea studio, which shows off to such advantage her lovely Italian furniture, and persuaded her to talk about film clothes.

" It is only natural," she said, " that an actress should only rarely find herself playing a part which is exactly herself. Often her natural temperament is entirely opposed to that of the character she has to play. If her costumes, however, are chosen carefully it is possible by accentuation to balance the actress's natural dress tendencies and to create the atmosphere of the film character. If an actress could buy her clothes for, say, the part of Lady Sybil Vere de Vere in the frame of mind of Lady Vere de Vere all would be well. Unfortunately she does not do so, but Miss Clarice Joyce goes to choose her costumes as to suit Miss Clarice and not to suit Lady Sybil. I am sure that it is a great mistake for the actress to have to buy her own clothes.

" I think every woman will admit that she is influenced by the clothes she wears. The effect of dressing the soberest woman in a gaudy jazz dress can be seen at any number of fancy dress balls. She feels and is an entirely different person. If the dress, therefore, is designed to suit the character, the actress will feel something of the character's atmosphere, and will unconsciously move in the manner suitable to it. It is a remarkable thing, but a girl dressed in a fashion foreign to her own inclination will even talk differently. A woman can certainly wear a witty hat or a witty dress, and will outshine herself when wearing them. Put that same woman into funereal raiment and it will be an effort to be amusing."

"And how about the costumes for the crowd? " I asked.

" From an artistic point of view I am afraid they are quite hopeless. You cannot possibly expect girls who, perhaps, only play for a couple of days in a film to get special clothes for it. At the same time some of them do come down in the most extraordinary garments, which are so blatantly unsuitable for the particular scenes that they are to play in that it is obvious that they have not given the matter very careful thought. I have known girls to turn up in black woollen stockings for a smart garden party scene and imagine that it ' would not show.' As a matter of fact," Mrs. Jackson added with a laugh, " I always keep a pair of white silk stockings on loan for occasions like that. At present, however, it would be obviously too expensive to dress all these smaller parts who only appear for a few minutes, but it does place a rather unfair premium on the possession of an elaborate wardrobe."

" What is it, then," I asked, " that you aim at when designing cheap costumes? "

MRS. GLADYS JACKSON.

"Characterisation. No two women either wear the same sort of clothes or in the same way. The dignified woman wears something plain and simple with very little or no trimming, but following beautiful lines. The *ingenue* will be in something more ' fluffy.' The blatant type will be too fluffy, will wear a skirt and sleeves that are too short and a neck that is just too low, and revels in what she calls ' the personal touches.' These are only broad

types, but there are innumerable subtleties in this characterisation by dress. I don't think I can do better than quote Mr. Gordon Craig on the theatre, for he has expressed himself as I cannot hope to do. 'For example,' he writes, 'make a barbaric costume, and a barbaric costume for a sly man. Now make another barbaric costume for a man who is bold and tender. Now make a third for one who is ugly and vindictive.' "

"Of course," Mrs. Jackson continued, "the audience does not and should not see these subleties. They are not meant to understand the technique, but they can appreciate the broad effects that result, and should be able to follow more easily the shades of difference which this care in dressing accentuates. So far all I have said is largely true as much for the legitimate stage as for the film, though greater care is needed for the screen because of that very absence of language. When designing for the film one has to remember all the time that one's only means of contrast are line and fabric. For the stage two dresses may be made in exactly the same way, but they will appear entirely different because they are carried out in contrasting colours.

"I always try to think out my ideas in white, grey and black, because it is so easy to get carried away by colour and imagine that a dress must film well when in reality its only beauty consists in its wonderful colouring. It is no proof that a dress will screen well because it looks well.

"The dignified woman comes off best in this respect, as rich fabrics like heavy satin or chiffon velvet—beautiful draperies—are most effective. Daintier and more airy materials depend for effect so much on advantageous lighting. One thing, however, is quite certain. It is hopeless to try to fake materials. The camera is so searching that a cheap material will shriek its cheapness all the louder when projected on to the screen."

MADAME RÉJANE

In the wonderful death scene in "Miarka, La Fille à L'Ourse," the Jean Richepin film classic, of which Messrs. Jury have acquired the British rights. The scene had a sad prophetic significance. Her marvellous portrayal of the old gipsy was Réjane's last triumphant achievement.

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With a view to enabling the average cinema-goer to acquire an interest in the profits he or she creates, the Corporation has instituted this system of small

From the foregoing details it will easily be seen that a holding of Cinema Premium Bonds is the finest in the world, and a comparison with War Certificates and Bonds will still further show their superiority. A War Savings Certificate costs 15s. 6d., and grows to £1 only in Five years, or 10¼d. per year. A War Bond costs £5, and all you receive is 5s. a year on your Bond. The Corporation's scheme is in itself

A TRIUMPH OF BRITISH ENTERPRISE,

because of the facilities it offers to the small investor.

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which means that allowing an average of £30 a week spent by each cinema on its programme, over five-and-a-half-million pounds has been spent out of this country by the British public, via the cinema proprietors, into the pockets of American manufacturers. And the popularity of "the pictures" is ever increasing. The cinema has an appeal to the public idea which no other form of entertainment ever had, and from a business standpoint there are unlimited possibilities of expansion.

The Corporation has acquired three large estates in Yorkshire, Wiltshire and Norfolk respectively, aggregating more than 1,250 acres, whereon will be produced pictures of a quality that will compare favourably with, if not surpass, any imported film. The Corporation will thus secure to patrons of its own cinemas masterpieces of production made at its own studios.

CO-PARTNERSHIP.

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With a view to enabling the average cinema-goer to acquire an interest in the profits he or she creates, the Corporation has instituted this system of small payments, and it is felt that the public will appreciate the facilities thus placed at their disposal, and will take full advantage of them. The Omnium Trust Corporation which is making this offer, was founded in 1918 with an authorised capital of £1,000,000. Its activities were hampered, however, by the continuation of the war, but now, after many months of careful preparation, plans have been completed for the acquisition of an extensive combination of cinemas in Great Britain, including some of the finest properties in the country—all of them well-established and in good locations. In order to cope with the programme as laid down, the Corporation's capital was increased in June last to £2,000,000, and again in December to £5,000,000.

The present offer is the outcome of carefully-laid plans which have taken months to develop, and the proposals now made mark

A NEW ERA IN THE HISTORY OF THE BRITISH CINEMA INDUSTRY.

The Omnium Trust Corporation recognises that it is not within the financial power of the average cinema-goer to pay down a large sum—even if he or she would like to do so—to acquire an interest in a go-ahead picture-house, and hitherto it has been necessary for the cinema patron to abandon the idea of taking up an interest because it involved an appreciable outlay. Now, however, this great difficulty has been overcome.

VALUE OF BOND DOUBLED.

The Cinema Premium Bonds as now offered unquestionably ensure to the picture-goer the finest possible investment, for the reason that not only will they be a direct charge on the profits of the Corporation, but they will be additionally secured by a CAPITAL REDEMPTION POLICY. This means that the repayment of the Bonds will be GUARANTEED. As previously stated, the sole cost to you for the fully-paid Bond will be £2 10s. Each Bond will be redeemable in Five Years by the Corporation to the holder at a premium of £2 10s.—JUST TWICE THE AMOUNT PAID FOR IT—or, if desired, the equivalent in Shares of the Corporation.

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FILM PRODUCTION.

In addition to the acquisition of cinema theatres, the Corporation is making arrangements to produce its own pictures for distribution to Omnium circuits. The production of films in this country has not been exploited on a large scale, but there is no doubt that, handled commercially, film production should rank amongst the foremost of British industries. There are at present over 4,000 cinemas in this country, which, on a conservative estimate, are visited by some 8,000,000 patrons each week. It is calculated that until recently quite 90 per cent. of the films shown in British cinemas were of American manufacture,

ever had, and from a business standpoint there are unlimited possibilities of expansion.

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CO-PARTNERSHIP.

The principles of co-partnership will be applied to all departments of the Corporation's business, and in the case of artistes a method has been evolved whereby they will share in the profits of the films in which they take part—in addition, of course, to the salary received.

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Our Short Story.

MASKS.

THE stately lady in black charmeuse drew the folds of her expensive wrap more closely about her as a piquant little blonde, very badly "made up," tripped past her to a distant table in the fashionable restaurant.

"Really," remarked the *grande dame* to her husband, in a petulant *sotto voce*, "it is impossible to go anywhere without encountering one of———"

The obvious reference to the peroxided but indefinably charming object of her scorn trailed off into silence as the orchestra crashed out the opening chords of a popular dance melody.

Meanwhile, the little blonde, all unconscious of this interrupted outburst of righteous indignation, had installed herself opposite a tall, sunburnt man with humorous, quizzical grey eyes, who greeted her with a quiet warmth that obviously masked a deeper feeling.

"Well, my sunbeam, been working hard?"

The girl shrugged her shoulders, and the smile she gave her companion held more of humorous resignation than of mirth.

"Roy, talk of anything in the world but work! I'm fed up to the teeth. I shall kick over the traces soon; I feel it in my bones. I wish my people hadn't had me educated! Then I could fling my bonnet over the windmill without conscience-qualms."

Roy Forrester silenced the outburst with a handclasp across the table. He knew the brave heart camouflaged by the rouge and the over-gold tresses. "Upon my word," he protested, "who'd imagine that for the past six months I've been imploring you to chuck everything and make me the happiest man in the world! Susie——" He bent nearer the animated little face, and looked ardently into the wistful blue eyes—"Susie Wray, for the ten thousandth time, will you marry me?"

"For the twenty thousandth time, dear, no! I'm not going to go all over the old ground again. Your father would die of apoplexy if he knew you had pledged yourself to a girl who had to change her name, dye her hair and paint a face to mask her real identity, because she wanted a fat job in the business where her father committed forgery. Another year, and with the little legacy Uncle Jack left me, I ought to be able to hold my head up again." The low tones trembled a little, the blue eyes grew misty, but the pretty mouth, set in firm lines, belied the hint of weakness. Then the poor little over-gold head was thrown proudly back. "Roy, dear, I'm going to work until certain debts of honour are paid, and then, perhaps . . . . . "

At an adjacent table, the *grande dame* and her husband were dining in sombre silence. Both were frankly, inordinately bored. Every now and then the lady's long white hand crept softly, with a stealthily caressing movement, to the laces at her breast. Beneath their long black lashes her brown eyes gleamed vindictively as she contemplated her unconscious spouse, whose own gaze was fastened with unfeigned interest on Susie Wray and her dining partner.

"Don't believe that girl is a wrong 'un," he said at last. "Tremendous personality, I should think, though she looks such a wisp of a girl."

"Frank! Do you think I'm going to endure this sort of thing? You've simply sat and stared at that girl of the pavement———"

"I say, Cora, steady on! God knows we quarrel enough without squabbling over an unknown girl whom neither of us is likely to set eyes on again! Don't you think you're a little ridiculous?"

The woman's eyes narrowed. Her lips curled, and again that subtly caressing hand smoothed the laces at her bosom. Her errant thoughts flew forward to the next hour, when her husband would leave her to go on to an appointment at his club, and she—well, she too had an important appointment. Only a little while longer of this unutterable boredom, and she would be crushed in the arms of her lover, whose impassioned note, safely hidden, rose and fell with the beating of her heart. And her face resumed its normal, carefully-cultivated expression of Madonna-like serenity, so entirely "in the picture" with her pale, dark loveliness.

At that moment, moved, perhaps, by a telepathic impulse, Susie Wray glanced towards the table on her left, but despite that admonitory message of reciprocated interest, remained oblivious of Frank Craven's ardently admiring scrutiny. She had eyes only for his companion. "Oh! Roy—Roy, dear," she whispered, "look at that beautiful woman with the raven black hair! Did you ever see a more perfect type of Madonna beauty! What a *good* face she has . . . . " The wistful shadow deepened in the brave blue eyes. "No make-up there, Roy. . . . Either outside or inside. . . . ."

The golden-brown eyes of the "Madonna," gazing beyond her into a world that peroxided Susie would never enter, grew humid with voluptuous memories of her lover's last embrace.

FRISSE-POULLET.

FILM TYPES. No. 2.

The Granite-jawed Silent-man. Specialises in shacks and ultra-heavy parts. Said to have acted through one whole film by the raising of an eyebrow. Teaches the Art of Laughter by Correspondence School.

CLARE HORTON

The famous Goldwyn Star, who will be remembered for her particularly successful performance as "Margaret Dean" in Jack Pickford's first Goldwyn picture, "The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come."

THE REALITY OF FILMS.

(As visualised by Mr. Gerald Ames, the popular actor and sportsman, who is now at the Hepworth Studios.)

THE public is crying out for good film stories, and is growing suspicious of the Fat Name and the thin story. Mr. Gerald Ames believes that there can be no ready method of finding suitable plays, either in the much-criticised adapted novel, or in the original scenario.

"Some books," he said, "have that vital something in them that will be sure to make good films—others have not. Just as some books make excellent plays for the stage, where, of course, you have the assistance of voice, language and colour and others could never be put on, so, with the screen it is only a few books that can be adapted with success. It is not a question only of action and incident, for a great deal more is needed than that. Is the fundamental idea new? Has the novelist or the playwright developed a new theme with a natural but unexpected *denouement*? Those are the important questions, and unless the right idea is there, the story must lack the necessary psychological and artistic interest. So many people imagine that a collection of disconnected incidents and thrills make an excellent scenario, and do not realise that we have long passed that stage. There must be a continuous and interesting story. It is not the producer's work to elaborate or develop his scenario. The story should be given to him complete in every detail, with the balance of character carefully worked out, and the continuity of the story clearly marked. His job is to hold the artistic balance of the scenes and to maintain the right proportions throughout the whole production. If he has to work on the story at the same time, certain scenes are sure to receive an undue prominence, and the balance of the play as a whole will be lost. The producer is neither the author nor the scenario writer, and should not be

MR. GERALD AMES.

expected to do the work of either while producing the play. He must therefore receive a complete and perfect scenario. At present none of the great literary minds understands the technique of the film, and the adaptation of a novel by a second hand must mean a loss of some of the original subtleties. As things are at present, however, the original scenario with the same range of thought and fields of action is difficult to find. A good stage play may make a bad film play, for it is impossible to compare the stage and the screen as vehicles of drama. It would be as absurd to argue as to which is the higher form as to ask 'Which is the greater art, sculpture or painting?' An entirely different medium is used in each, and obviously the stage has this great difference, that it has at its command voice, language and colour, all at present unknown to the film.

"On the other hand, one of the great advantages that the film possesses is its freedom from many of the stage conventions. I have often been oppressed in the theatre by its limitations and its obvious conventions. Its restricted number of scenes: four or five compared with the film play's forty or fifty. Its devices to cover the entrances of characters and to obtain their exits when their little bit is done. Of course, when I was acting on the stage I accepted its conventions without question.

"The film is so much nearer to life.

"It is on this subject that so much nonsense has been written. One hears every day of the so-called 'exaggerations' of the film as though the cinema actor had to mouth and gesticulate to 'get over.' The opposite in actual fact is the truth. In the theatre the back rows of the pit and the gallery cannot see the actor's expression at all. His make-up is little more than a mask, and his voice and gestures have to convey the entire character to the remotest seats in the house. In front of the camera practically no gestures are needed. The smallest unconscious movements of the muscles of the face, which in real life accompany all thought or emotions, are exaggerated by the lens, and all movement and all facial movements must be tighter and more, rather than less, restrained.

"The attention of the cinema audience—a misnomer as it 'hears' nothing—is concentrated on these smallest flickerings of the muscles and any conscious contortions would be absurd and would appear hopelessly exaggerated. The theatre audience takes in colour, voice and language. The cinema audience, on the other hand, is entirely held by the actor's expression, and the slightest changes 'get over.' Without thought and a full conception of the part no cinema actor can give a good performance. He must *be* the part. The camera strips his make-up from him and shows to the public, not only his physical resemblance to the character, but drags out from underneath his mind and his personality.

"An actor, to make a success on the screen, must not only imagine his part, but feel it, think it and be it."

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MISS PHYLLIS WADELL.

Winner of the Pathé £1,000 prize, undergoing her first film trial under the new "Sunlight" arcs.

PORTABLE DAYLIGHT.

One of the main difficulties in the way of procuring a really comprehensive weekly programme of topical events has been the question of obtaining efficient lighting for the camera. A new system, however, which is now being used of easily handled "Sunlight" Arc Lamps makes it possible to obtain records of all kinds of events both inside buildings and in the streets by night. It is claimed that two of these new arc lamps radiate a better light than twenty-four ordinary studio lights with their very much more cumbersome bulk. Portable lighting of this kind has been used with considerable success in America, but has not had any extensive tests in this country. If the experiments which are at present being carried out prove that it is as suitable for all kinds of news collecting over here the general cinema-going public will gain by a very much improved service of topical pictures. It will be no longer necessary to restrict the weekly budget solely to incidents which take place out of doors and in a good light, but it will be possible to make use of this easily transported artificial light, whenever the "story" is of sufficient value to justify the expense. Certainly at present a great deal of organisation is needed before this lighting can be used, and its employment necessitates the use of two motor lorries containing the necessary plant for generating power and the cartage of large quantities of heavy cable. In time, however, the actual method may, and doubtless will, be simplified so that the taking of topical films with the aid of artificial lighting will no longer be a "stunt," but will be part of the ordinary routine of the companies which supply the public with its animated news service. It is claimed by those who are at present making use of these arcs that apart from their mobility they possess another important virtue. The actual light, it is claimed, is practically the same as sunlight, hence their name, and that the photographic effects obtainable are the same as those to be achieved on a sunny summer afternoon. Our photograph shows Miss Phyllis Nadall, the winner of the thousand pound prize in the recent Pathé Freres' beauty competition, being given her first trial after receiving the award. The new "Sunlight" arcs have been called into action.

PAULINE PETERS

Mr. Walter West's new leading lady, who has been given her first big chance in the Broadwest film "In Full Cry."

MOVIE-LAND FOR THE KIDDIES—AND NO NONSENSE ABOUT IT!

By V. DISMORE.

HIGHBROW moralists are very funny at times, and never funnier than when they attack the ethics of the Silver Screen. To listen to some of them one would imagine that crime was unknown in the world before the advent of "the pictures."

Their favourite complaint just now is that the pictures are a direct incentive to juvenile crime, and they seldom fail to drag in a hint to this effect on various occasions when certain young unfortunates are being tried for their delinquencies. It is not the youngsters' defence they have so much at heart as the damning of the Cinema. Moralists are like that. They are very fond of the side-track.

But their argument is a peculiarly vulnerable one. To begin with, they are ridiculously sentimental over the child criminal. Is there any psychological difference between the boy who robs the orchard and the boy who robs the gas-meter? Yet our little moralists would have us believe that the apple-stealing boy is merely naughty and the gas-meter pilferer a criminal.

If the Cinema is to be blamed for juvenile crime, the anarchist before a Court of Justice might well plead extenuation on the ground that he was early addicted to the study of "Julius Cæsar"!

Actually, degenerate children are comparatively rare. In most cases it is just misdirected energy and a love of adventure that works the mischief. And for this misdirected energy parents and guardians must be held responsible, not the Cinema.

The truth is that the Cinema has been made the moral scapegoat for all sorts of social crimes. There will always be found those who are ready to lay the blame of deficiencies in our social fabric upon a particular institution. It suits their lazy minds far better than a careful exploration of fundamental causes. They make cant a cheap substitute for truth.

If some of our arduous moralists, instead of so often chastely shutting their eyes at self-conjured visions of evil, would take a good look at facts, they would discover (no doubt to their acute disappointment!) that the Cinema, far from being an evil factor in the lives of our kiddies, is a direct preventive of evil.

For thousands of children the Cinema is the only alternative to the streets as a medium of amusement, and the streets—especially those where such youngsters play, are not the healthiest place possible for them from a moral point of view. They hear fragments of conversation and see things which are infinitely more harmful to them than even a crude love-scene at "the pictures," which they probably laugh at as being exceedingly funny. Not that I think love-scenes ideal fare for the children, although the force of public opinion is steadily eliminating the more pernicious type of "love interest." I still have high hopes that municipal and parental enterprise will co-operate to provide a Child's Own Cinema in every town, showing them adaptations of their story-books and pictures of the myriad wonders of the earth. Many child minds are keenly susceptible to beauty, and the Cinema, with its marvellous capacity for a vivid representation of natural beauty, provides food to many an æsthetically starved little soul. The Child's Own Cinema would, of course, specialise upon natural beauties—not as Nature studies, but as an integral part of a story.

Here we touch upon another objection of the highbrow. He tells us that the Cinema tends to spoil the youngsters' appetite for literature, that it makes them lazy-minded.

I think not. A good film adaptation of a good book will send the child back to it with renewed delight, if he has already read it, or, if he has not, lure him to it by showing its attractions in the most easily-understandable form. In this the Cinema shows that it is much wiser than many parents and teachers, who scare the youngsters away from desirable books by giving them little lectures on the "sort of books they ought to read." After all, pictures, in one form and another, have always been recognised as a legitimate inducement to children to read good books. Why should the Cinema be damned because it carries on the work more eloquently?

No! It is just that certain moral highbrows have their knife into the Cinema, simply and solely because it is a popular source of amusement.

It is time we refused to listen to their bleatings. They themselves suggest no remedy for what they pretend to deplore. But that is all part of their mental make-up. They are frankly out to destroy.

In Movie-land, on the other hand, there is an ever-increasing evidence of vitality, the mother of all progress. And because it is vital and progressive it is going to do great things for the children, educationally and morally.

Therefore, Movie-land for the kiddies.
And down with the Cinema Pussyfooters!

IMPRESSIONS OF THE THEATRE.

THE WHITE-HEADED BOY.

By Mrs. Gordon Craig.

SARA ALLGOOD (seated)
In "The White Headed Boy."

HOW often we find people beginning life in one branch of work and ending it in another! Du Maurier (père) spent three-quarters of his life in drawing, and then suddenly began to write wonderful books, and now perhaps the majority think of him first as the author of "Trilby" and "Peter Ibbetson," though nothing could make those of his own generation forget the beautiful drawings of his own time, an age of superlative ugliness in which he made for us a little oasis of beauty. He, alas, said his "good-bye" to us when his career as a writer had barely begun, so it is impossible to say in which branch of art he would have been greatest. His writings showed greater imagination perhaps, but whichever it might have been, he now reaps his "sowing" as he so touchingly wrote, and we are personally, and in two fields of work, the poorer.

Now we find Mr. Fagan, who began his career, I believe, as a playwright, developing widely into a producer of plays. We are already indebted to him

for many fine productions, notably " The Merchant of Venice," and this week I have seen two plays produced by him, " The White-Headed Boy " and " A Midsummer Night's Dream " (as widely apart in character as it is possible for two plays to be), and a promise of more to follow.

" The White-Headed Boy " is a comedy of Irish life by Lennox Robinson, full of humour and pathos, but with a good deal of sordidness about it, and more avarice than I had hitherto associated with the Irish temperament. But, then, we do not meet the Geoghegans until somewhat late in life, by which time the White-Headed Boy, the idol of his mother, has worn out the patience of the entire family—except the mother's (the patience of mothers being of good hard-wearing material !)—not to say having strained the financial resources of the aforesaid family almost to breaking point by his debts and failures to pass his examinations, in spite of his superior education and supposed cleverness. No doubt they all started life as the good-natured, easy-going creatures that we like to think the Irish (politics apart !), but I think jealousy of the white-headed boy and disappointment in him has embittered them all, and we see them at their worst, as nothing fits so ill on an instinctively generous nature as parsimony, and the worst of it is the idol is not worth the sacrifice, so the play is without a hero. Up to the last one hopes he will make good, and he very nearly does by taking the law into his own hands, marrying Delia, and signing on as a road mender, but a few more odd hundreds thrown into his lap by the family and Delia's father to save their pride, and a promise on the part of his new wife to do all the work, soon sends him back to the less narrow way, and we go away having to accept the fact that a white-headed boy he will remain to the end of time. So the thread of the story seemed to me somewhat thin, which makes it the more remarkable that such an extraordinary amount of interest attaches to it and completely absorbs us during three acts.

It is, first and last, a character study, and as such intensely interesting and admirably played by the entire caste. Arthur Shields, as "Denis," the White-Headed Boy, looks the part exactly, and plays it with a rather dazed air that expresses weakness admirably. Sydney Morgan, as "George," the eldest brother, the distracted head of the family, a character that made little claim on our sympathies, yet managed to get a good deal somehow, was excellent also. Ursula Tremayne, as " Jane," impressed me very much in quite a minor part, but with the look of tragedy (her life, too, has been sacrificed for Denis, and she has lost her " big, hairy man " for his sake), which she sustained extraordinarily well throughout; she has a very expressive face, with reserve force, and should be excellent on the films, too. But the honours go to Miss Maire O'Neill, as " Aunt Ellen," and Arthur Sinclair as " John Duffy," Delia's father. He is great in the part, and it was such a relief to have someone come on the scene who knew his own mind. Duffy knows what he wants, and gets it, and we are given an enormous amount of entertainment in the getting of it. " Aunt Ellen " is a crafty old schemer, who has lied gloriously (again to save the family pride), but Duffy finds her out at once, and uses his knowledge as a lever to make her promise to marry him (he has always loved her) and, incidentally, to get £100 out of her.

He then proceeds to get more out of two other members of the family, swearing each of them to secrecy, and goes off very pleased with his night's work ! Aunt Ellen, of course, is delightful; ever so much younger in spirit than her nieces, bursting with pride in the devotion of her old lover, and revelling in the humour of the situations, which she sees as clearly as the rest see it, although she is one of the chief persons concerned; is a most refreshing character study, and though it struck me as a "Sydney Farebrother " part, Miss O'Neill plays it delightfully in her own way, and never overplays it, which she must be rather tempted to do.

Nan Fitzgerald, as " Delia," gave a very sound rendering as a wife for "Denis," with plenty of backbone, which is lucky for him, as he has so little himself, and I loved the little scene with the three girls, Jane, Delia and Baby, specially when they were joined by Aunt Ellen. It is altogether a most refreshing and delightful little production, and one not to be missed.

Photograph by Delphi, Paris.

HARRY PILCER and MISTINGUETTE (The French Marie Lloyd)

In "Paris Tin Jazz."

IN HARRY PILCER'S DRESSING ROOM.

An Intimate Interview with the Famous Dancer.

SO many of his English friends have been asking whether Harry Pilcer is ever coming back to London that I took the opportunity, just before leaving Paris, of securing a little private talk with him. He is playing in the revue, " Paris Qui Jazz" at the Casino de Paris, and when he leaves the stage he receives his most intimate friends in his dressing room.

A great change has come over the man, who obviously cannot forget that he was the dancing partner of Gaby Deslys. A wonderfully vivid, full-length portrait of her hangs over his dressing-table, and smaller studies surround it. As he talked to me, stretched at full length on his divan, his eyes seldom left the picture, so that it seemed less of an impertinence than I had feared to touch upon a subject so near his heart. It is pathetically true that he seldom speaks of anything else. "Gaby was always so well received by the British public," he said, " and had such a special place in their affections, that I feel I cannot go back—alone—to scenes that would be too painfully eloquent of her. You see, we were more than partners of ten years' standing—we were the closest friends. My present appearance in Paris is the first since the war, and before that I played in ' Suzette ' with Gaby at your Globe Theatre in London. We were on the stage during a Zeppelin raid. It was an experience calculated to strike terror to any woman's heart. But you know Gaby——! "

I waited for a moment, while his eyes again sought the photograph. " I believe you also played in films with her? " I ventured.

" Yes, three—all in Paris. Later in the year I may make some more pictures. But so far as the stage is concerned, I feel I cannot hold out much longer. The loss of Gaby has been such a terrible shock to me that I feel I want to retire from the stage altogether, and to go back to New York."

* * *

It is difficult to associate the man in his dressing-room with Harry Pilcer as he appears on the stage with Mistinguette (the French Marie Lloyd). Together, they bring the house down. And in his " poses " with the beautiful Derlhys it is the same story. Perhaps the tribute of Derlhys herself throws the most illuminating light on the character of the famous dancer. " He is so delicate," she says. " You know mine is not an easy rôle. It is—how shall I say?—typically Paris. But Harry Pilcer is so great an artist, in every sense of the word. He has not only temperament, he has heart." And she repeated warmly, " He is such a *camarade*. So gentle . . . "

When I said good-bye to him, I carried away with me the memory of a man with the kindest smile and the saddest eyes. " My friends in London will understand," he said. " In no country in the world was Gaby so beloved as in your own. And that is why I cannot come back."

C. MANCINI.

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OUR PARIS LETTER.

(In which an Englishman in Paris keeps a Frenchman in London in touch with the movie world, in all its varying phases, across the Channel.)

MON CHER AMI,

I went to see La Maison du Cinéma yesterday which Monsieur Loucher, the proprietor of that well-known paper, "La Cinématographie Française," has founded and which will fill a long-felt want in the French movie world. I spoke of it in my last letter, but had no idea that it was so large an affair as I found it to be.

When you go up the Boulevard St. Martin on your way to the Place de la Republique, you cannot possibly miss it on your left; it's a huge, red, five-storied building at the corner of the Rue de Lancry and the Rue Bondy, where all the movie folk are made welcome and may obtain any information on matters cinematographic. The entrance hall will contain a permanent exhibition of all the most modern film appliances, and in the basement are two exquisitely decorated rooms for the projection of pictures. The interior of the whole building is in white sandstone with oak panelling, and contains twenty large, light offices fitted with every modern convenience; most of these have already been let to various firms, so if any of your friends want accommodation they'd better apply at once. On the fifth floor are the offices of the Cinématographie Française, whence the whole enterprise will be directed. The editor, Mr. Simonot, who gave me a most charming reception, expressed a hope that members of the English trade would visit the Maison du Cinéma when in Paris, and that the whole scheme would tend to unite more firmly than is at present the case the divers French firms.

* * *

I think there is no doubt that such a veritable Cinema club, for that is what it will eventually become, can only be to the welfare of everybody and help us to a better understanding of each other's difficulties and idiosyncrasies, thus improving relations which so often have left much to be desired.

What a vast divergence there is between English and French mentality. . . . There has recently again been much discussion as to the commercial value of instructive films. In this respect I must say that the French public is ahead of us. There seems to be an innate tradition in England that anything of a scientific nature is somehow derogatory, and therefore rot; I know that at school the dabblers in " stinks " were considered with vast contempt, and even supposed not to be quite good form. The harm which this sort of national snobbery did us became apparent during the war, when we were forced to realise how far ahead of us the foreigner was in the scientific production of many articles. I do not believe that this natural trait is begotten so much of a dislike of using our brains as of an overwhelming sense of insular superiority, which makes us feel that it's " damned cheek " for anyone to attempt to teach us anything.

* * *

For instance, I saw an educational film the other night which explained the action of the human eye; the public found it extraordinarily engrossing, and one could hear it being discussed till well into the middle of the next picture. In a series of excellently demonstrative animated line drawings it showed the action of a beam of light when refracted by a lens and the consequent action of the human optic lens which by suitable contraction or expansion focusses the picture on the retina. The effect of different sorts of eye-glasses of the view was then screened, and the film ended with the explanation of divers optical illusions amidst the general applause of a public, which probably for the very first time understood the mechanism of their own eyesight. I have an uneasy feeling that this picture would not have gone down an inch at home.

At the same theatre I also saw a reel which, I fear, did the producers no good at all and very probably brought the cinema into bad repute. The particular scene I have in mind showed the heroine's child being operated upon by the long-lost father, but without an anæsthetic, and the wretched infant's too realistic tears and facial contortions created quite

NINA WHITMORE.

Of the Ba-Ta-Clan Theatre, Paris. Formerly with the Goldwyn Film Company.

OUR PARIS LETTER—*continued.*

a lot of indignation on the part of the audience, which did not at all realise that it was all fake. The general concensus of opinion was that such brutality should not be allowed for the sake of producing a film, and I must say that it was rather too realistic to be nice.

* * *

You remember that I told you that the Préfecture de Police was making a film to show people the right and the wrong way to cross the streets in Paris? Well, it's released now, and really rather childish, entitled "The Good and the Bad Pedestrian"; the characters are a father, his daughter and her two rival suitors. The old man promises his girl to the one who will not risk widowing the lady prematurely when taking her round Paris. One of them is shown going from pavement to pavement with a perfectly glorious disregard of the most elementary prudence, while the other, the " hero " in this case I presume, stalks amidst the traffic with perfect immunity, moving from island to island like an archipelago steamer. No vast amount of imagination is required to see the *dénouement.* The careless fellow is slain and flattened, while number two, who has followed the police instructions, marries the girl and is happy ever after.

* * *

The Ciné Journal announces the pending formation of a Film Trust (no, not Himmelfarb again), which is to comprise seventeen companies with a joint capital of nearly forty-two million francs and representing ninety-four establishments. A big combine like this will be able to bring far more weight to bear on behalf of the trade, and act as a greater safeguard against Government rapacity than any number of "syndicats," and in this respect will probably do more good than trusts are popularly credited with.

Two legal experts, Messrs. Meignan, legal adviser to the " chambre syndicale de Cinématographie," and J. J. Dumoret deserve a vote of thanks as the joint authors of a book called "Le Code du Cinéma," which contains all the laws, statutes, decrees, legal decisions, and heaven knows what beside, applicable to the cinema industry.

* * *

I think you will agree with me that it's an excellent idea, for hitherto whenever any manner of dispute arose in the cinema world (author's and producer's rights, adaptations, renting, artist's engagements, etc.), the case has generally been judged by analogy to the theatrical law-suits, a procedure which hardly gave very accurate results. This volume contains the first precise information on these matters, and I wish the two authors every success.

By the way, Agnes Souret, la plus belle femme de France, is acting in a film called " Le Lys du Mont St. Michel," and if her acting is anything as good as her looks, she should become a very big star indeed. I shall have to look her up and ask her how she likes the work.

I heard an amusing tale about a well-known cinema actor who has recently returned to Paris from the Balkans. At a reception given by the Premier of one of the small States, he was placed at dinner between the Minister for War and the Minister for Agriculture. The banquet over, he noticed to his dismay the disappearance from his pocket of a presentation gold watch he had been wearing. The situation was obviously a delicate one; however, plucking up courage, he told his host of his loss.

" Whom were you sitting next to," asked the Premier. The star mentioned the two Ministers, adding that it was inconceivable that either of such high functionaries could even be suspected of such an action.

Shortly after his watch was returned to him by his host. " I hope to goodness," said the delighted actor, " that you did not ask either of these gentlemen? "

"Oh! no," replied the Prime Minister, " the one who had it doesn't even know that I've got it back."

Yours ever.

" CLOSE UP."

FIVE TIMES ROUND THE WORLD AND THEN TO FILMS.

Noted Actor to Play for Films.

SHAYLE GARDNER in "Julius Cæsar"—

SHAYLE GARDNER is well known to the majority of London theatre-goers, but it will be news to them to learn that Mr. Gardner is to feature in a series of six motion pictures, which will be made under the direction of Mr. Rex Wilson.

Outside the New Theatre (where Shayle Gardner is now playing in "The Wandering Jew") are hung several portraits of this famous New Zealand actor. Mr. Rex Wilson saw these photographs, and, in Shayle Gardner, great possibilities as a film actor. He sent for Mr. Gardner, and within half an hour had "signed him up" to play the leading part in a series of six films, the first two of which will be "St. Elmo," in which he will take the title rôle, and "The Cricket on the Hearth."

Although by birth a New Zealander, having been born at Auckland, Gardner spent the greater part of his adventurous life away from his native island. At the age of nine he was selling newspapers in the streets of an American city, for even at that early age he thirsted for adventure and ran away from home. Two years later he made his first trip round the world, working his passage as a steward's boy.

—And in "The Sunshine of the World."

Since that time Gardner has been round the world four times.

Arriving in London after one of his trips he became interested in theatrical work, and not long afterwards played five different parts in " Joseph and his Brethren " for 28/- a week. Later he toured in " Grumpy " and " Instinct."

When war broke out he enlisted as a private in the New Zealand Army, and, when demobilised, held the rank of Captain.

On returning to London and the theatrical world he played Peter in " The Eyes of Youth," the leading part in " The Sunshine of the World," Brutus to Henry Ainley's Mark Antony, and before he joined Matheson Lang he appeared opposite Irene Vanbrugh in " The Land of Promise."

Shayle Gardner is a nephew of the late Bishop Boyd Carpenter, and his grandmother was a great friend of Charles Dickens. When his grandmother first went to New Zealand Dickens asked her to send him a description of the wonderful country, which she did. Some months later she received fifteen pounds from Dickens as a reward for her literary efforts.

Mr. Gardner is very enthusiastic about his engagement to play for the screen, and although he is at present filming during the day, and playing two parts in " The Wandering Jew " at night, he hopes to be able to devote all his time to film work when the run of this production is concluded.

WANDA HAWLEY

Keeps the gold in her locks by a ten-minute bath in the Californian sunshine, religiously administered every morning

CINEMA FINANCE.

IF the average British investor realised that there are, in this country, nearly 4,000 cinema houses, through whose doors twenty millions, or more, people pass every week, he would follow more closely than he does at present the position and progress of the various companies which are engaged in this new, but wonderful, enterprise, and he would be far more keen than he is at present in taking a personal financial interest in the development of the industry. No other form of entertainment can boast of such figures, and certainly none has ever captured such a vast appreciative following as the "movies." The future of the industry is fully assured whilst its dividend earning possibilities are limitless.

* * *

And it is an industry which is constantly developing, improving and expanding its usefulness. Only a few days ago it was reported in one of the daily papers that a cherished dream of the profession had been realised in the invention of stereoscopic cinematography. If this be so the effect on the future of the industry can hardly be over-estimated. If the inventor, who, by the way, is an American film producer, has really succeeded in securing such a combination of photographic lenses as will produce a film picture where the figures stand out solid from the landscape with the true stereoscopic effect, and so give a complete illusion of life and movement, such a discovery will completely revolutionise film production. It will mean that the business will have to make a new start, whilst the possibilities that hinge upon it are enormous. It will make many fortunes, and intending investors should closely watch a development which will vastly increase the usefulness and popularity of the great cinema business.

* * *

One thing which militates against the popularity of cinema shares with the general investor is the fact that our cinema programmes are still overcrowded with American pictures. The British cinema patron is surfeited with these productions, many of which, although shown at first-class houses, are anything but first-class films. It is absurd for the managers to contend that America produces better pictures, or that the atmosphere of California is so vastly superior to that of Great Britain, in a photographic sense, that it is necessary to look to that country as the producer of the finest films. When we have more British productions like "Lorna Doone" which has just been filmed on the actual site of the famous novel in Devonshire, and H. G. Wells' "Kipps," also just put upon the screen, the investor will feel that he is supporting British labour and talent, rather than piling up more dollars for the American producers, by taking a hand in some of the all-British film producing companies' enterprises.

Speaking of British films, it is interesting to note that they are making a very good impression in France and other European countries. Only the other day a British film, "The Tavern Knight," was reported to be booked for six first runs in Parisian houses. Here, again, is evidence of a new field for British enterprise, and the investor must watch closely the progress of those companies who are seizing their opportunity in this direction. In France the cinema is making great strides, and there are loud complaints that the legitimate drama is being quite neglected, whilst the picture houses are crowded. Other trades in France attribute their bad business to the popularity of the picture screen, particularly the booksellers who assert that their trade is being killed by the cinema. Be this as it may, it shows that the capacity for profit earning by British film producing concerns is very great, and that the Continent of Europe will prove a fine market for British films in the near future.

* * *

The Associated Provincial Picture Houses, Ltd., announce a second interim dividend of 2½ per cent. for the current financial year, which ends on the 31st May next. The company was formed in January, 1914, to acquire contracts and sites in various large provincial centres and to erect cinema houses on the most up-to-date lines, together with cafés and other subsidiary enterprises. The authorised capital is £500,000 in £1 shares, 100,000 being six per cent. non-cumulative preference and 400,000 being ordinary shares. At the beginning of 1920 £25,000 debentures had also been issued, and there were then mortgages for £37,100. The board is a very strong one, and amongst its members are Sir J. D. Rees, Sir W. H. Bass, Sir W. F. Jury, and Mr. A. E. Newbould, M.P. Naturally the intervention of the war, so soon after the company was formed, has handicapped its progress, but there seems to be good reason for belief that under peace conditions its development will now proceed more rapidly. The increase in the cost of building operations is obviously an adverse factor, but the management may be trusted to do all that is possible to counteract this difficulty.

* * *

It is an open secret that very many of the leading London theatrical companies will not have such a cheerful story to tell their shareholders this year as was the case in the two or three preceding years. This is not in any way the fault of the various managements, but is the reflex of the war time prosperity and the outburst of spending which followed the Armistice. Thousands of Army and Navy men were passing through London daily in the war days, and every one of these craved for amusement and forgetfulness. To-day we are relapsing into more normal conditions.

Finance—continued.

In view of all these circumstances it is satisfactory to hear that the London Pavilion has done fairly well during the past year. The net earnings were £2,500 lower at £17,100, and while the Ordinary dividend is maintained at 7½ per cent. the bonus, which is paid free of tax, is reduced from 2½ to 1 per cent. As before, a sum of £3,000 is transferred to the general reserve, bringing that fund up to the respectable figure of £15,500. On the whole, however, the shareholders must be congratulated on a satisfactory year's working.

* * *

Palace Theatre shares are only 1⅛—1⅜, although transactions seem to have taken place at 20s. 6d. quite recently. As we pointed out last week, shareholders are naturally wondering why they are not being communicated with, as they expected the contract to be carried out and the balance of the surplus money to have been received at the end of December. We understand, however, that the purchase was completed a few days ago.

* * *

The Alliance Film Corporation was floated in November, 1919, with a capital of one million pounds, and a prospectus was then issued offering half a million 10 per cent. participating preferred and ordinary shares to the public. The enterprise was launched under the auspices of men well known in the theatrical and cinema world, such as Mr. Gerald du Maurier and Sir Walter de Frece, M.P., but the progress hitherto made has been very slow, and the shareholders are naturally getting restive. The feeling of dissatisfaction has been increased by the fact that changes in the composition of the Board have taken place without any satisfactory reason being given, and that at a recent meeting presided over by Sir W. de Frece the Press were rigorously excluded, which is always a mistake when a public company meeting is held. If the company have good news to tell they have no reason to hide it, and, if bad, they should take the public into their confidence, and tell the whole truth. This is the only way to avoid exaggerated rumours and slumps in share prices.

* * *

A novel form of investment is offered to the public by the Omnium Trust Corporation, in a prospectus which appears on page 20 of this issue. It will there be seen that the offer is of £5 Cinema Premium Bonds at the price of £2 10s. each, payable by instalments, if desired, and the issuing house describes this as "a new era in the history of the British cinema industry." The prospectus goes on to say: "The Omnium Trust Corporation recognises that it is not within the financial power of the average cinema-goer to pay down a large sum—even if he or she would like to do so—to acquire an interest in a go-ahead picture-house, and hitherto it has been necessary for the cinema patron to abandon the idea of taking up an interest because it involved an appreciable outlay. Now, however, this great difficulty has been overcome."

It is stated in the prospectus that the Premium Bonds offered are a direct charge on the profits of the Corporation, but that they are additionally secured by a capital redemption policy. Each bond is redeemable in five years at its face value of £5. It is intended that the Corporation shall devote the proceeds of the Bond issue to the acquisition and control of a large circuit of cinema theatres in Great Britain. Details of the programme mapped out will be found in the prospectus. As a speculative investment the scheme has possibilities, but it is obvious that there are risks in a venture of this description, and the intending investor must be prepared to take such risks as a proposition of this nature inevitably entails.

* * *

CINEMA AND THEATRE SHARE PRICES.

Alhambra Company—1 1/16.
Alliance Film—4/-.
British Photo Industries—17/6.
Cinema Combnie—1/4½.
Drury Lane—⅞.
Empire Palace—(15) 1¾; (10s. paid) 1½.
Gaiety Theatre—1⅞.
London Pavilion—2¾.
London Theatre of Varieties—¾.
Metropolitan Theatre of Varieties—1.
Moss Empires Ordinary—8¼.
The Oxford—4.
Palace Theatre—1⅛.
Provincial Cinematograph Theatres—1 3/16.
Stoll Pictures—13/-.
Stoll Productions—5/6—6/6.
United Varieties Syndicate—1⅛.
Victoria Palace—1⅛.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—Our Special Correspondent will be happy to answer Financial Queries relative to the world of the film on this page. Communications should be addressed to "FINANCIER," c/o "Movie-Land," 4-6, St. Ann's Chambers, Broadway, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.4.

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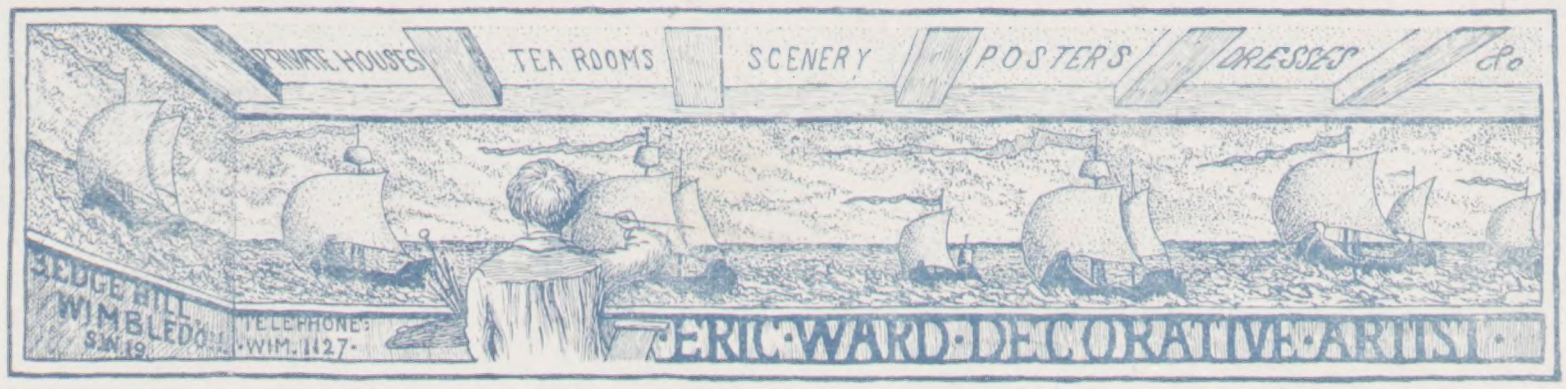
BRITISH MUSEUM 10 MAY 21



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